

VERMONT TOBACCO EVALUATION & REVIEW BOARD

Minutes of the Board Meeting

April 9, 2008

Approved May 7, 2008

Members Present: Theodore Marcy, MD, MPH, Brian Flynn, ScD, Dani Carey, Representative Patsy French, Ryan Krushenick, Gregory MacDonald, MD, Erica Peters, Edna Fairbanks Williams

Designees Present: Sheri Lynn for Acting Commissioner Moffatt, Marcia Lawrence for Commissioner Mike Hogan, Christy Taylor Mihaly for Attorney General Sorrell, Shevonne Travers for Commissioner Cate

Guests: Chris Finley, Sharon Mallory, Todd Hill, Department of Health, Michelle Wallace, Virginia Renfrew, March of Dimes, Kelly Stoddard, Ryan O'Connor, Shannon McCarthy, American Cancer Society

CALL TO ORDER: Dr. Marcy opened the meeting at 2:10 p.m.	
PUBLIC COMMENT: Ms. Wallace spoke on behalf of the March of Dimes (MOD). She provided copies of the MOD position on tobacco control funding. MOD asked the Legislature to earmark \$100,000 last year and again this year to expand a program to target pregnant smokers statewide with a research-based intervention utilizing vouchers that can be used to purchase diapers, etc. as an incentive to remaining quit. It has been piloted for three years in Rutland with MOD funding. It is also now in Newport. There was an increase to the FY08 tobacco control budget of over \$100,000. Ms. Wallace said Senator Snelling and Rep. Hunt and other legislators thought the money would be used for pregnant smokers. She noted there is a direct impact on the health of the baby if a women who smokes during pregnancy, including low birth rate and related health care costs are substantial. Approximately 1,000 of the 1,200 pregnant smokers in Vermont are enrolled in WIC so there is a targeted opportunity. MOD supports the board's overall budget recommendation and brings it to the attention of legislators. There has not been a decline in smoking rates in this population over the years; nearly 20% of pregnant women smoke in Vermont, one of the highest rates in the nation (nationwide average is 12%). Ms. Wallace understands that an earmark in a program that will likely be level funded could take away from other services but she restated that the legislature increased the budget last year and Senator Snelling and Representative Hunt thought the increase would be used for pregnant smokers. The MOD asked the language be included to ensure adequate funding statewide. The MOD advocates for funding but would not implement the program. Ms. Mihaly asked about quit rates post partum. Ms. Wallace said over 70% relapse but there are nine months to make a significant impact on the health of the baby and related health care costs.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• March of Dimes Position
REVIEW OF MINUTES: The board approved the minutes of the March 12, board meeting.	
REPORT FROM THE CHAIR: Dr. Marcy said he and Mr. Hill attended a meeting with colleagues from other states to discuss health systems change. He also met with a think tank in Washington DC organized by the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation to address tobacco use and health care. It consisted of stars in this field of research including Michael Fiori who is charged with developing the U.S. Public Health statement of tobacco use treatment.	

<p>The position of board administrator has been posted and candidates have applied. The position closes on Friday, April 11. The search committee will begin its process the following week.</p> <p>Members of the evaluation committee and VDH staff are reviewing two proposals for the evaluation contract. The board will vote on the recommendation on May 7 as well as the new administrator.</p>	
<p>FY2009 CESSATION PROGRAMS APPROPRIATIONS: Dr. Flynn said he knows quite a bit about smoking and pregnancy through his work with Dr. Laura Solomon. It is a significant problem. On the other hand, there is the question of what impact a fully-successful program would have on smoking prevalence in the state in view of the relatively small proportion of pregnant smokers and high relapse rate. The larger issue is the direction of the expenditures by legislative mandate. There have been small examples but this is a larger portion of the cessation budget. Dr. Flynn is concerned with the precedent; we may have lots of advocates asking for direction of resources to a particular program. There is a process in place. The cessation committee has considered allocation resources on this program. He thought the board might want to consider a recommendation to the Senate to remove earmarks. Ms. Mihaly knows the board recommended some amount of money be used for pregnant women cessation but it was in the context of a recommended \$3 million increase for the tobacco control program. She said no one argues against helping pregnant women quit but earmarks take away the ability of VDH to put the money where it is most effective to meet the board's and the state's overall goals.</p> <p>Dr. MacDonald believes earmarks shortcut the board's process. He said the earmark is more than we give to any community; the board and VDH thoroughly vet this. He thinks it is outside the usual process and is somewhat arbitrary. Dr. Marcy is concerned about the process and the precedent. All the board's committees think very carefully about the program and budget for the board to recommend each year to the Governor and Legislature. If it is possible for interest groups to go to legislators for earmarks, then he is not sure the role of the board. He said the statute was written to set up this board; volunteers spend a great deal of their time and energy thinking hard about these questions, balancing out competing demands with limited resources. If the board allows this precedent to stand, it disregards the process put into place by the Legislature. He is concerned about pregnant women who smoke but he is also very concerned about the overall program, how it gets direction, how it is organized and managed with limited resources. He thinks the board should state that it would not want to see the House or Senate include language that would direct VDH how to spend the money. It would be best if the board would vote on a recommendation. Ms. French said there is a strong possibility with the current revenue, program funding may be in jeopardy.</p> <p>MOTION: The board views the budget recommendations as allocated by the different programs within VDH (community</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • FY2009 Cessation Line Item (VOTE)

<p>coalitions, media and public education, etc). Any earmarks within the programs are not recommended because they undermine the process established by the Legislature through statute in forming this board. Seconded. Motion passed. VDH abstained.</p>	
<p>COMMUNITY COALITION GRANT APPLICATION REVIEW: Dr. Marcy stated the charge of the board is to rank the list of the capacity building proposals (and discuss if any implementation grants should instead be capacity building). The board also must decide if it recommends not funding capacity building proposals that did not meet minimum requirements. The board must also create a rank list of all of the implementation proposals and decide on whether any of those proposals should not be funded because they do not meet minimum criteria. There may also be programmatic recommendations.</p> <p>Detailed spreadsheets were distributed showing each of the three scores by board members and three scores by VDH staff. All 19 current grantees applied; three new applicants submitted a proposal. The anticipated budget for FY2009 remains the same as this year's budget (\$1,023,624). The spreadsheets listed the applicants in rank order according to the mean of six scores. If applicants were awarded all the funds requested, then the anticipated funds for FY2009 would allow VDH to award grants in the amounts requested by the two capacity-building applications and 15 implementation applications. Individual proposals were then discussed. In particular, the reviewers discussed one implementation application that some reviewers felt would be suited to capacity building and the two capacity building applications. There was consensus that the implementation grant should be considered a capacity building. The coalition will be asked to revise its work plan.</p> <p>MOTION: To fund all three grants discussed as capacity building with the implementation applicant submitting a revised work plan. Seconded. Motion passed. One abstained.</p> <p>The board then discussed the five applications with the lowest rankings. There was also discussion about a particular coalition (not in the bottom five), its relative ranking and planned use for funding. Reviewers have the ability to change scores based on today's discussion. Two reviewers will review the application and scores and send results to Ms. Ryan. Ms. Mihaly said the board can give VDH an advisory statement to recommend the funding for this coalition be reduced.</p> <p>MOTION: To accept the ranking order of the remaining implementation proposals with specific comments noted regarding the specific coalition discussed. Seconded. Motion passed.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community Coalitions (VOTE)
<p>ADJOURN: This meeting adjourned at 5:00 p.m. Signed by: Rebecca L. Ryan, MEd Administrator</p>	<p>Approved by: Theodore Marcy, MD, MPH Chair</p>